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ing no secret to you, Lord Forreton, or to my two friends, in confessing that I find myself by accident rather than by desert or right, the wife of the prime minister of England; and that I am but a single season removed from my provincial obscurity. The muster-roll of the *clique* of fashion is at present only half familiar to me; for, after all, *le dictionnaire des etiquettes* forms but a dry study of those born without the pale of the purlieus to the courts of kings. I know nothing of your bye-laws, your prejudices, your antipathies, and excommunications;—a dutchess is still to me a dutchess, however dowdy; and I should neither dream of rejecting a Lady Julia for being too fat, nor a Lady Maria from the disfigurement of her red hair. Were Almack's a purely aristocratic reunion, claimable by privilege of peerage, there could be no difficulty in adjusting the demands of its aspirants; but the decrees of mere fashion are too arbitrary, and too ungracious, and too difficult of comprehension, to one so inexperienced as myself.

"You remind me of the malefactor whose plea of insanity was rejected, from the subtle logic with which he proved himself to be mad. But whatever your motive, real or alledged, I cannot but revere, Lady Willersdale, the prudence of your decision."

"Miss Dudley says nothing," interrupted Captain Mordaunt. "Perhaps she already regrets the delicious security of having her interests safe in the immediate hands of a patroness."

"Lady Willersdale has already the promise of subscriptions for the season for us both," replied Florence, lifting her face from her work, and throwing back the raven hair which had intruded over her beautiful forehead. "But as you provoke me by this accusation of selfishness, allow me to assure you that even with my insignificant experience of society, I despise your Almack's altogether."

"Indeed!" said Lord Forreton, "are you aware of the pains and penalties annexed to such a declaration? Do you know that you may remain partnerless for the whole season? that you may be burned at the tea-room fire for heresy?"

"Yet I formed my old opinion upon the good information of one of the most exclusive of the exclusives,—who assured me last night, 'that Almack's was the most unfirtible ball in London;—' *qu'on y étoit trop en évidence*;—that in the memory of the oldest dowager, its glaring publicity had never been selected as the local of a proposal;—that the decided *abonnées*, who are as sure to be found there as the chandeliers, are neglected at other balls, and postponed as partners till the inevitable Wednesday night; that it forms an indispensable certificate to persons of doubtful *ton*; but a work of supererogation to those who are better amused elsewhere."

"Excellent!" exclaimed Lord Forreton, perceiving by the contemptuous glance of Miss Dudley's eye, that her maxims were ironically recited. "Who could not swear to one of Lady Juliana C.'s *tirades*."

"Pardon me, my instructress was a person far more interesting to yourself."

"Lord Forreton coloured deeply with the gratification of discovering that *himself* and his predilections had not escaped notice in Hamilton Place. He did not, however, disclaim the insinuation.

"As I perceive that Lady Alberville has

favoured you with her confession of fashionable faith, you will be the more surprised to learn, as I have already learned from herself, that she has graciously accepted the post rejected by Lady Willersdale's better discernment."

"By no means!—like other potentates, she will despise the mob she rules."

"And no one," added Lady Willersdale, "can be better versed in the art of its government. The world of fashion is all her own; *et elle connoit bien son monde*! Besides, Lady Alberville is at present unincumbered by the care of a husband's popularity; a care which must necessarily have fettered my own movements in a similar position."

"Long may she remain so," observed Lord Forreton, rising with a parting bow. "We cannot spare so brilliant a meteor to the twilight of domestic life;—no, no!—let her remain a patroness."

"Captain Mordaunt suffered his friend to depart alone, with a view to interrogating Miss Dudley's opinions of her new acquaintance."

"She did not, however, keep him in suspense; acknowledging that of all the strangers she had seen in London, Lord Forreton was the only one gifted with the *air noble*, her inexperience had assigned to the universal aristocracy of England."

"Forming my conclusions from Lord Willersdale's person and address," she added, "I had expected to find the whole nobility graceful, and polished, and intellectual; and I almost wish that the error of my judgment had not been rectified by the sight of Lord K—, and Lord S—; or by the sound of Lord Bernard Neville's *niaiserie*. But this Lord Forreton of yours, Captain Mordaunt, is a younger brother of the Willersdale school."

"For his sanity's sake, I rejoice that he is out of hearing; for I fancy he is somewhat more than Willersdale's contemporary."

"Not quite," observed Captain Mordaunt, "but he is within a year of the fatal forty; a fact betrayed by the provoking veracity of the peerage. But have a care of your enthusiasm in his cause, Miss Dudley: have a care!—for I forewarn you that Forreton is not a marrying man."

"Nor I a marrying woman!" replied Florence, neither resentfully, nor discomposedly. And as Captain Mordaunt at that moment took leave of them, Lady Willersdale hastened to remonstrate with her on her rejoinder.

"Not a marrying woman! *voilà bien une phrase de demoiselle*!"

"But not the less a true assertion on my part. How! my dear Lady Willersdale!—can you suppose that I, who know so well the miserable influence extending from the poverty of an Irish landlord over his wretched dependents, that I can still selfishly dream of augmenting the embarrassments of the Mitford family?—that I, who know and care for every inmate of every hovel on its estates, could wish to wring the means of my future existence out of their squalid labours?"

"Indeed I do not! and still less do I imagine that you would condescend to waste your affections on one who has consented to resign them."

"Harry Mitford has done well!" resumed Florence indignantly, "and I will follow his example."

"But I wish you would begin your good works by resigning the prejudice that this

Anacharsis Cloots of yours represents the whole human race.—You have Lord Barton at your feet—Mellerton—my poor brother;—and, unless I am much mistaken, Lord Forreton, the unique and supreme Forreton himself, is already on the critical verge of a sentiment."

"Possibly! but not for me.—*Nous verrons*."

"The conversation was now interrupted by the arrival of Lady Isabella Vyvyan, who came to insure the company of Florence Dudley in a visit to Lady Gertrude Wentworth; who, as she was well disposed to escape from a further discussion with Lady Willersdale on the subject of her private attachments and public admirers, readily consented; while Helen resolved to devote the period of her absence to a visit in Wilton Crescent, where Lady Mordaunt was now established."

Darnley is also an agreeable piece of light reading to while away an idle evening with. It is of a more ambitious, Walter Scottian character, than the last named novel: and there is a good deal of spirit in the descriptions both of character and scenery. We had marked a scene at the court of Henry, for an extract, but we find our limits forbid.

The *Lost Heir* is no favourite of ours: the opening character is, we think, a poor imitation of Father O'Colloghan, in Colly Grattan's story of the Priest, or the Garde du Corps. The *Irish* in both tales is miserably bad, and so is the radicalism.

The Irish Gentleman belongs unfortunately to that class which lends its name to a certain plain and pungent species of snuff: it is a coarse nasty book.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

Memoirs of the Tower of London. By Britton and Brayley, embellished with a series of engravings on wood, by Branstons and Wright. London—Hurst, Chance, and Co. 1890.

This is a cheap compendious history of the great metropolitan fortress of Britain, compiled in that able workmanlike manner, which we might expect from the experienced hands of Messrs. Britton and Brayley, embellished with wood cuts by the more juvenile, but, in their way, not less skilful workmen, Messrs. Branstons and Wright. It is an amusing, as well as very pretty book, but yet not at all equal in beauty of embellishment to the "Tower Menagerie," by the same artists, to which this volume is intended to form a companion. We think it bad taste, and dislike exceedingly the system adopted in this and some other recent works, of printing wood vignettes on blank pages, instead of incorporating them with the text. It is not doing the cuts justice, for they invariably look like dingy blots in the mass of white paper by which they are surrounded; while, by taking a place legitimately belonging only to the finished copper or steel plate embellishments, and to which the wood cut has no just pretension, they provoke a comparison that would not otherwise have been thought of, and deserve the rebuke due to presumption and forwardness. As a head or tail piece nothing can be more appropriate and effective than the good wood cut; it is far better for these purposes even than the most elaborated copper or steel plate, for its bold and vigorous effect easily receives that character of freedom and facility which should always appertain to such embellishments, while its colour is in perfect harmony with the page

on which it is placed. The Art of Wood Engraving has been recently carried to an astonishing and unexampled pitch of excellence in Britain—a consequent result of that general diffusion of knowledge of the principles of light and shadow, and of picturesque effect, which constitute two of the chief characteristics of modern British Art. But this success should not tempt the wood-engraver from his proper sphere—ne sutor ultra crepidam. We respect and admire the elephant very much, but have no desire to see him, or her, (for we believe the one most in vogue at present is a lady,) dancing a hornpipe—and much as we like the brazen serpent—we mean the musical instrument so called—as a fundamental bass in an orchestra, it would give us but little pleasure to hear it grunting out, (we cannot use the appropriate term,) in ever so captivating a style, a solo concerto. By the way, talking of wood cuts, has the reader ever seen “Northcote’s Fables,” published about a year since? Probably he has not—yet it is, of its kind, one of the most beautiful of books!

Elements of Plane and Spherical Trigonometry, with the First Principles of Analytic Geometry. By James Thomson, L.L.D., Professor of Mathematics in Belfast College. Second Edition, Belfast, Simms and McIntyre. 1830.

THOUGH this is called a second edition, it is, in fact, the first offered to the public; the former having been intended chiefly as a text-book for Dr. Thomson’s pupils, and written as an outline to be filled up and illustrated orally in his lectures. In the present edition “the investigations are given at such length as to be easily understood by readers of ordinary talents and attainments;” and it has been the author’s aim, to comprise in a small compass, useful and interesting matter, “so that the person who shall make himself well acquainted with what it contains, will find it easy to acquire a knowledge of all that is yet known in Trigonometry, and to apply it to Astronomy, and other branches of Science.” Dr. Thomson’s high character as a Mathematician, and the deserved success of his Treatises on Arithmetic and Modern Geography, are powerful recommendations of the present work; whilst the execution of it, both in printing and plates, is highly creditable to the press of Belfast, and shows that excellence in this department is not confined to the capital, but is to be found also in at least one of our provincial towns.

A Compendium of Astronomy, and an Astronomical Dictionary, designed for the Youth of both sexes. By R. T. Linnington.—London, Whittaker and Treacher. 1830.

THIS Compendium aims simply at offering a methodical arrangement of the elementary parts of astronomical science, collected from the latest works of the most eminent astronomers. As a popular compilation, introductory to more profound and scientific works upon the subject, we can warmly recommend it, as a clear and intelligent treatise, full of useful information to the uninitiated; and easily understood. There are few, if any, mathematical calculations employed in the work, but, as a mere Introduction to works of a higher order, we prefer it considerably to Ferguson or Keill, and it is less bulky than either. To the treatise itself, an *Astronomical Dictionary* is subjoined, compris-

ing an explanation of all the astronomical terms in general use, a brief memoir of the most celebrated astronomers of all times and places, an account of the different constellations, of the instruments chiefly used in astronomical observations, and a variety of desirable information. The writer is a teacher in the City-Road, London.

The Ghost of Freedom; or, a Voice from the Stone on which the Treaty of Limerick was signed. A satirical Poem on the History of Ireland; with Notes. By Michael Sellers.—Dublin, 1830.

A copy of a coarse-looking little book, under the above astonishing title, was left some time ago at our office. We dipped into Canto 15, and read as follows:—

“But Billy had also some reason to know,
That he had some friends in the island of green,
Fortune planted seed which corruption let grow,
While virtue denied the poor papist a screen.”

We thought this rather a bad hit of the satirical rogue, and turned over a new leaf in hope of something better; this was our reward:—

“But tho’ James had bequeathed his warriors to chance,
Tho’ fortune did frown on their fate at the Boyne,
The trumpet of fame still bid them advance,
For in Limerick the females were ready to join.
And the man attended to the woman’s call;
The brave indignant soul was burning,
Death, or Glory! let us fall:
Let Limerick’s ruins be our mourning.”

The sublimity of this passage was too powerful to admit of our reading a word farther; we laid the Ghost of Freedom on our shelf, among the rest of the rubbish, never, we hope, to rise again.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

The Monthly Magazine. February.

THE articles are not so well worked-up in this, or indeed in any of the Magazines, as in Blackwood, but this is a lively, varied, and entertaining Number. Walks in Ireland are better than usual, though they are generally good. The Devil’s Mill, a Lucan, or rather Luttrellstown story, reminds us strongly of a German tradition, from which we more than suspect it is principally borrowed. We think the German story has somewhere appeared in an English dress; our own recollection of it is a little misty, but it runs somewhat thus:

The Devil’s Mill.—(From the German.)

There is a mountain called Ramberg, in the district of the Harz, the peak of which is crowned with enormous blocks of granite, piled in gigantic masses of the most fantastic shape. If the reader happens to be acquainted with the rocks called the Needles, near the Bailey, in the Bay of Dublin, and imagine them ten times as high, and based upon a lofty cliff, he will have some conception of the group in question, which, like the structure on the road to Lucan, is called the Devil’s Mill.

At the foot of the mountain, a mill once stood, raised in the ordinary way, by human hands. It had provided bread to many successive generations of jolly millers, till at length a peevish discontented tenant got possession, who continually grumbled at every thing about him, but especially, that in the shelter of the valley, he could seldom get a cap-full of wind to drive his mill. In the depth of his discontent,

after a three days’ calm, during which he could not grind a grain, he wished in the bitterness of his heart, that the devil would fly away with his mill, and fix it on the highest pinnacle of the peak of the Ramberg.

Parlez du diable et voila sa queue. Auld Hornie was at his elbow in the twinkling of a bedstaff, with a “what’s your will,” on his tongue’s end, and a ready promise of complaisance with the wish of the miller, or rather an engagement to build a new and much better mill on the proposed site, on the usual condition of leasing his soul and the mill together, for a term of years, after which they were to revert to the new proprietor.

Eager as the miller was for a nice new mill, on the top of the Ramberg, he demurred for some time to the condition of the horned devil. At length, however, the calm continuing, and his customers growing importunate for their flour, he sullenly assented to the stipulation, scratched his arm with a bit of glass, and sealed the compact with his blood; while the Devil, on his part, agreed to build a perfect model of corn-mills, on the appointed spot, before cock-crow the next morning. Night fell, cold and dark, dreary and wet, and dismal, but the Devil was in his element, and worked like himself, while his brother demons tossed him the huge granite rocks, each in itself a mountain, from the summit of the neighbouring Blocsberg, as easily as an Irishman could throw stones to a pavour in the plains of Piccadilly.

Many hands make light work—the mill was speedily completed, and the Devil called down upon the miller to request he would step up, and see how he liked the job. Gladly would the miller have been spared the excursion at such a time and place, and in such company, but old Sootie cried “honour among thieves,” and the reluctant miller was obliged to comply, his only remaining hope being that he might find some defect in the mill, which would enable him to refuse taking it off the builder’s hands as a finished structure.

Now it happened some years before this, that the miller had married a wife, and she was a gentle and pious woman, though mated to so wicked a husband, and she saw and feared the visits of the tall, ill-looking man with the lame foot, and she prayed Heaven to avert all evil and mischief from her husband, and when she saw he was going away from his home with the ill-favoured stranger, at that suspicious hour of the night, she did not attempt to restrain him, for that she knew would only inflame his determined obstinacy, but she besought him to take their eldest little boy with him, to keep him company, for, she said in her heart, if he be tempted to mischief, he will look on little Hans, and withhold his hand from harm, for our innocent child’s sake.

So the miller took his son in his hand, and set out with Auld Cloutie for their guide, and scaled up the rough and shingly side of the mountain, as easily and swiftly as ever they glided over the green sward in summer, but the miller trembled as he went for all that, and stood aghast, when on reaching the ridge of the hill, the moon, emerging from behind a dense mass of dark vapours, discovered a stupendous mill of faultless finish, which a rising gust set in full motion, wanting nothing but corn, in order to yield a plentiful supply of the finest flour imaginable. But the miller had read the Bible in his youth, and heard it upon Sundays still, and both as he climbed the mountain, and gazed